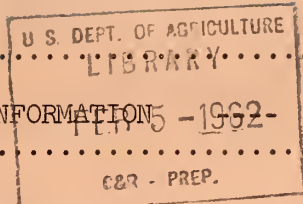


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Reserve

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CSS BACKGROUND INFORMATION - 1962-

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THE CONSERVATION RESERVE OF THE SOIL BANK

The Conservation Reserve of the Soil Bank, along with other programs, has been used to help meet the agricultural surplus problem. During 1960, about 28.7 million acres of cropland on about 306,000 farms were held out of production under Conservation Reserve contracts.

The legal authorization for this program expired at the end of the 1960 crop season, halting the addition of new land to the Reserve. However, existing term contracts remain in effect through the years of the contract period.

Farmers participating in the Conservation Reserve have voluntarily signed contracts with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, agreeing to retire cropland from production for periods of 3 to 10 years and devote it to conservation uses. Farmers have also agreed to comply with any acreage allotments on their farms and to reduce their total crop acreages by the amount of land placed in the Reserve.

To protect the land taken out of production, farmers are obligated to provide adequate vegetative or other approved conservation cover. The Federal Government makes an annual rental payment for the land held out of production and pays part of the cost of establishing the conservation practices on the Reserve tract.

The Conservation Reserve has helped farmers achieve adjustments they wanted to make or has speeded up adjustments that have been in progress. Some operators of large farms have used the program to reduce the size of their farming operations and the need for hired labor. Others have cut down or withdrawn from farming because of health, age, or other reasons.

1956-60 Highlights

The Conservation Reserve program began late in the 1956 crop year. Highlights of the program to date are as follows:

1. During the 1960 crop season, approximately 306,000 Conservation Reserve contracts were in effect, covering about 28.7 million acres of cropland in all States except Alaska, Hawaii, and Nevada. This is more than 6 percent of all U S. cropland as shown in the 1954 Census of Agriculture. Approximately 6.2 million of these acres were under contract for the first time in 1960. The rest is acreage which was placed in the program in earlier years and remained under contract in 1960. The average annual rental was \$11.85 per acre.

2. The land in the Conservation Reserve would normally have produced large quantities of farm commodities to add to existing surpluses. Of the acreage in the Reserve in 1960, a survey shows that 4.5 million acres were formerly devoted to corn, 4 million acres to oats, 3.8 million acres to grain sorghums, 3 million acres to wheat, and about 11 million acres to other crops, hay and pasture.

3. About 70 percent of all the cropland in the Conservation Reserve is in the form of whole-farm units; that is, all the cropland on the farm is taken out of production. A special incentive was offered for this type of contract, since it removes the entire production potential of the farm and leaves no land for more intensive farming. A farmer who has placed all his cropland in the Conservation Reserve can continue to live on the farm, maintain a home garden, and use the permanent pasture and orchard land.

4. Grass cover is the most popular of the conservation practices carried out on Conservation Reserve land, especially in the Great Plains States. In this area, the program is stimulating the return to grass of vast areas of dryland planted to grain under wartime needs.

5. More than 2 million acres of the 1956-60 Conservation Reserve acreage are being planted to forest trees. Tree-planting contracts are for the full 10-year period. When cropland goes out of production and is planted to trees, it is likely to remain out of production for a long period of time, perhaps permanently.

6. Practices designed especially for wildlife protection have gained wide acceptance by participating farmers and general approval of sportsmen and wildlife organizations. More than 300,000 acres of the 1956-60 Conservation Reserve acreage are being devoted to wildlife cover and water impoundments for wildlife.

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